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# ALL VOLUNTEER FORCE

## A SPECIAL STATUS REPORT

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Last July 1st, after 33 years of nearly uninterrupted dependence on the draft, the Nation committed itself to a military force consisting entirely of volunteers. Now, only eight months after draft authority expired, some have already declared the volunteer force a failure.

The move from conscription to complete dependence on volunteers is a transition of historic proportions, and as a result it has inherent uncertainties. Unfortunately, uncertainties give rise to speculation—speculation that can undercut vital public support. Therefore we must minimize speculation by setting out the facts as they become available to us.

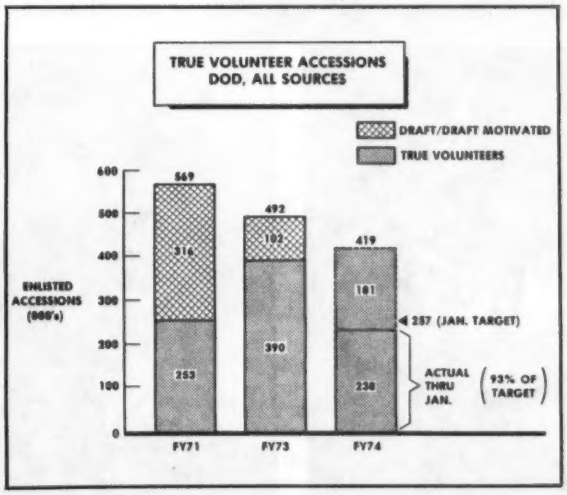
The speculation revolves around four major issues:

- whether or not enough recruits are being obtained;
- whether or not quality standards have been reduced;
- whether or not there is racial imbalance in the Services; and
- whether or not the volunteer force costs too much.

First, there is the matter of quantity. How many enlistments do we need and how many are we getting? To sustain our force of over 2.1 million men and women in uniform requires nearly 450,000 officer and enlisted volunteers in the current fiscal year. That annual requirement is nearly equal to the total armed forces of West Germany, and it exceeds the total employment of all but two United States corporations.

**It requires that we take about one in three eligible and available young men each year. To many, that seems an impossibility; yet, we are doing it.**

The draft not only brought men into the Army, but also induced them to enlist in the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force. However, it was not until 1971, when the draft lottery was introduced and each enlistee had a lottery sequence number, that we were finally able to estimate how many of our enlistments were actually draft-motivated. We found, for example, that only about 60 percent of Navy and Air Force enlistments were true volunteers. Thus the conversion to an All Volunteer Force was not to be just an Army task.




Three major events since 1971 have affected volunteerism:

- We brought our troops home from Vietnam,
- A special military pay raise was granted which nearly doubled the pay of junior enlisted people, and
- The Services greatly increased their recruiting forces and related recruiting activities.

We now estimate that the four Services will enlist at least 400,000 men and women this fiscal year, an increase of 60 percent over the number of true volunteers obtained in 1971. This demonstrates that management leadership, competitive pay scales, and public support can combine to produce very significant results.

If we meet our estimate of 400,000 enlisted volunteers we will be about 5 percent short of our goal for this year. We prefer no shortfall at all. **But that shortfall—20,000 out of a total strength of 2.1 million—is not large enough to cause us to think about returning to the draft.** Not when we have managed to keep increasing the number of volunteers each year, and have achieved an increase of 60 percent in just three years.

Today we are sizing our military forces on the assumption that whatever recruiting goals we need will be met. In fact, we have programmed an increase in the strength of the Army in the budget request just submitted to Congress for Fiscal Year 1975. That, I think, demonstrates our confidence in being able to meet or stay close to our requirements.

### Army Recruiting

Now let's take a closer look at the Army. In the seven months since June, the Army has met 89 percent of its recruiting goal for that period. However, most of the accumulated shortfall occurred last summer when the recruiter force was not at full strength. In the last four months the Army has met 95 percent of its goal. In January alone, the Army recruited 19,000 men and women, the largest single monthly total achieved in 13 months.

The United States Army today *is* making the All Volunteer Force work. Skeptics need to let the Army demonstrate its full capacity for meeting the challenge head-on.

One of the most dynamic programs we have underway to increase the supply of potential enlistees is one designed to bring greater numbers of women into the Services. In 1971, women accounted for about one enlistment in 40. Today the ratio is one in 13, and next year it will be one in 12. By the end of Fiscal Year 1978 there will be over 130,000 women in uniform.

Reaching 100 percent of our recruiting goals, of course, is not the sole criterion for measuring progress. We are also concerned with the quality of our force—the ability of individuals to perform on the job as members of a team. This is the *second* All Volunteer Force issue that I would like to discuss.

### Quality of Recruits

Quality is a complex concept. Its many facets include physical capacity, moral behavior, trainability, intelligence, and—most importantly—motivation and discipline. The Services try to measure all of these things, before an individual is signed up, to predict whether or not he will be

## STRENGTH OBJECTIVES FOR MILITARY WOMEN

| | END OF FISCAL YEAR | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | FY 74 | FY 75 | FY 76 | FY 78 |
| ARMY | 29,900 | 39,000 | 45,200 | 52,700 |
| NAVY | 16,900 | 21,100 | 24,300 | 24,800 |
| MARINE CORPS | 2,400 | 2,700 | 2,400 | 3,100 |
| AIR FORCE | 24,700 | 30,700 | 36,800 | 50,100 |
| TOTAL | 73,900 | 93,500 | 109,200 | 130,700 |

successful. At present, some 31 percent of the males in the military age group are ineligible for service.

The testing process permits us to enlist many individuals who may not have proven themselves with high school diplomas or steady jobs, yet once in the service can demonstrate a capacity to learn military jobs. Such individuals thus become proficient at a skill and make a contribution to society—both in service and afterwards.

Our underlying policy—that each enlistee must perform satisfactorily—is firm. Yet, there has been criticism that the All Volunteer Force has required a lowering of standards. Actually, the reverse is true. The trend is clearly toward a better quality mix. Below-average individuals now make up only 10 percent of all new enlisted entrants for the four Services, compared to 15 percent in 1964, and compared to 36 percent in the general population. Today, the actual content in the Army of Category IV personnel—the below-average group—is 18 percent, down from 22 percent in June 1972.

The high school diploma is another indicator of quality. Non-high school graduates tend to have more discipline problems and higher retraining rates, and more early discharges. For that reason, the Services seek to maximize the intake of high school graduates. However, the Army's experience shows that four out of five non-high school graduates make good soldiers. We were disappointed, therefore, that the Congress took action this year to restrict new entrants to a minimum level of 55 percent high school graduates. When the number of high school graduates available is not enough to meet requirements, then the Service should have the option of recruiting non-high school graduates. Altogether, the four Services are doing about as well today in terms of new accessions as in 1964 when high school graduates averaged 68 percent of all enlisted accession, including draftees. Among the Services, however, there are substantial variations. So far in Fiscal Year 1974, the Army is averaging 54 percent high school graduates in its new accessions, compared to 67 percent in 1964.

That is not the whole story, however. Non-high school graduates have an opportunity to obtain their diplomas while in service, and many do. Because of the number who achieve high school equivalency in Service, the Army's high school graduate content has actually increased, from 70 percent in June 1972 to 71 percent today—and this, in spite of a heavier intake of non-high school graduates this year.

A diploma is primarily a measure of motivation and discipline. In the volunteer era, the Army is able to use a supplemental evaluation system during the first six months of an enlistment that permits it to identify those who do not have the potential for success. These individuals are then separated, but without embarrassment either to them or to the Army. Such a supplemental system was not possible while the draft was in effect, since it would have allowed draftees who did not want to be in the Army to disrupt training or otherwise cause trouble, in order to be discharged. Today, personnel who make it through the training process and are assigned to units are better motivated, which reduces administrative burden and turbulence and improves unit esprit.

### Service Tough Enough

Some have questioned whether today's Army is tough—capable of fighting and maintaining discipline. Some have complained that shifting kitchen work to civilians is a

The Military Services continue to offer enlistees a chance to participate in physically demanding careers such as with the Navy's underwater demolition teams (UDT) (parachutist above) or as combat members of the Marine Corps (above). At the same time, technical careers also are available as demonstarted by the Air Force staff sergeant inspecting the wiring of a modern jet aircraft (far left) or the soldier operating the sight station of a TOW missile system (left).

mistake. The decision to remove irritants in service life was designed to professionalize the man in uniform, not to make him lazy. There is no national policy which dictates that a man in uniform should be demeaned by make-work or kept from his training, his job, and his unit by tasks unrelated to his military mission.

On the contrary, it is an *increase* in the professional atmosphere and the prospect of challenging work that will insure the highest motivation among military personnel. The young person of today is a questioning person, but that does not make him undisciplined. If he gets the kind of leadership which our professional officers and NCO corps are capable of giving, then he will get his answers and respect his leaders—and will do his best when called upon to do his job.

### Equal Opportunity

The third All Volunteer Force issue is the racial mix within the Services. In December 1970, blacks comprised

**HOW DO WE MEASURE QUALITY?**

**UPON ENTRANCE INTO SERVICE—**

| CHARACTERISTICS | DETERMINED BY |
|---|---|
| • Physical Condition | Medical Examination |
| • Moral Background | Enlistee Statement<br>Checks on Misdemeanors, Felonies, Etc. |
| • Trainability | Aptitude Test For Military Jobs: Electronics, Mechanics, Clerical, Etc. VERBAL, MATH, SPATIAL PERCEPTION. |
| • Motivation/Discipline | Interviews, HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA<br>Success in Training |

**LATER IN SERVICE—**

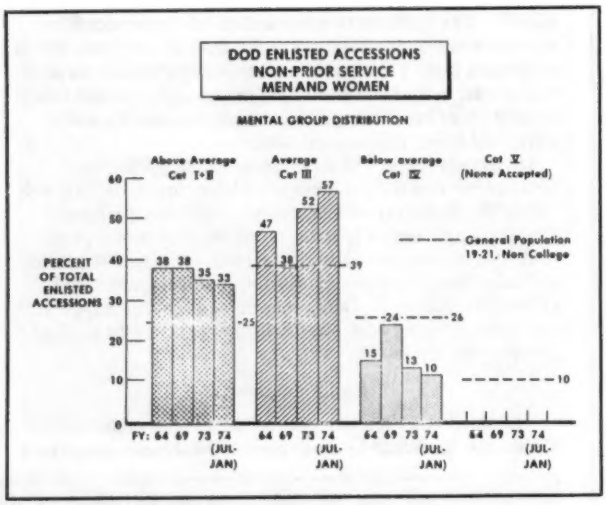
- Administrative Separations, Courts Martial, Company Punishment, Offenses Such as AWOLS, Willful Disobedience.
- Commanders' Evaluation of Performance

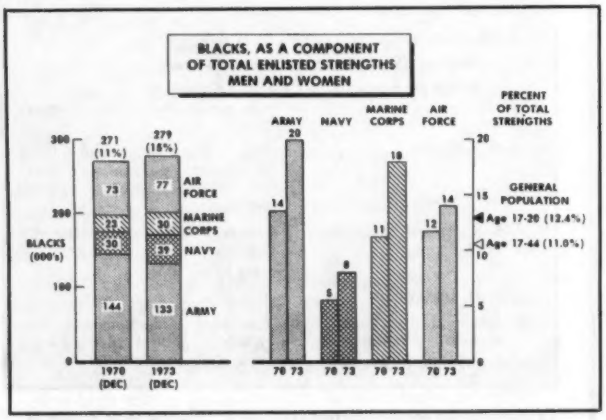
11 percent of total enlisted strengths. Today that figure is about 15 percent, compared to a general population figure of 13 percent. The Army's percentage has increased from 14 percent to about 20 percent since 1970. We are watching these figures but are not now concerned about them, for one very important reason: The Department of Defense sets high entrance standards for enlistment—standards designed to assure that an applicant can perform a military mission as a member of a team. Performance is the sole basis upon which the Department of Defense seeks to accept or exclude any individual. We are an equal opportunity employer.

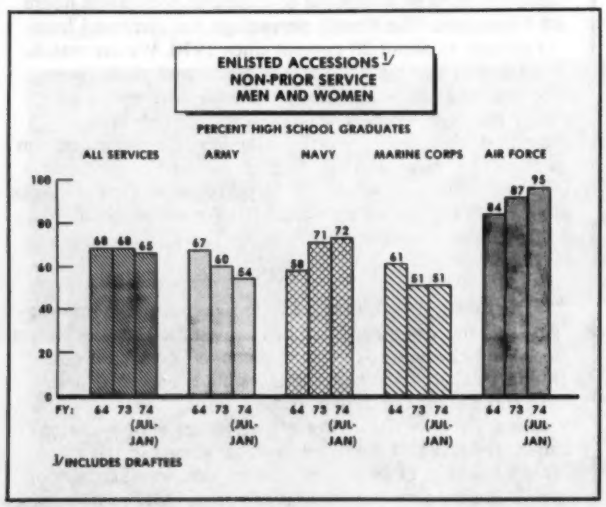
### AVF Costs

The fourth All Volunteer Force issue is cost. Some suggest that the volunteer force has caused the Defense budget to be so heavily burdened with personnel costs that our military capability is being hindered. Let's see whether this claim stands up under examination.

First, we have the matter of pay. There is no question about the fact that pay levels have increased in the Department of Defense, just as they have in all sectors of the U.S. economy. The genesis of recent DoD pay increases




is found in legislation passed in 1967 that established the principle of full comparability between Federal civilian salaries and those found in the civilian sector. A formula was set up which guaranteed that Federal salaries (except for executives) would keep pace with wage and salary increases in the private sector. At the same time, a similar comparability measure was passed (the Rivers Amendment) to cover military pay. Provisions were also enacted for periodic upward adjustment of civilian and military retirement annuities. Excluded from the comparability pay increases, however, were junior officers and junior enlisted personnel. I remind you that this was in 1967, well before the All Volunteer Force was under consideration. Thus I simply make the point that, except for one special pay raise which I will discuss in a moment, the large increases in Defense personnel pay costs are the direct result of comparability pay legislation, unrelated to the All Volunteer Force.

In 1971, as part of the $3 billion so-called Project Volunteer package, Congress granted a special "catch-up" pay increase for junior officer and enlisted personnel. Prior to that time, first term enlisted personnel had received *no* increases, not even comparability increases, between 1952 and 1965, and only small raises between 1965 and 1971. As a result, the first term enlisted member found himself earning less than the Federal minimum wage, frequently living at the poverty level (especially if he were married), and in some instances actually on welfare.

The first termer was earning about 60 percent of what his non-military friends could earn in the civilian sector. This simply meant that our first-termers—many of them draftees—were bearing far more than their share of the cost of the Nation's defense program. They were being heavily taxed through the imposition of poverty-level wages. The best that one could say for the situation was that it was disgraceful in a country as rich as ours. But, more to the point, one who contemplates a return to the draft should not count on rolling back the wages of the first-termer to reduce personnel costs. It simply will not happen.

Thus in any reasonable analysis of the incremental costs of the All Volunteer Force, one should not include the effect of the 1971 "catch-up" pay raise for first-termers. I believe, as the Gates Commission believed, that it was deserved in the interests of fairness and equity, and should have been done whether we moved to an All Volunteer Force or not.

If we do not include the comparability and the "catch-up" pay raises, we find that one can attribute only about $750 million to the incremental cost of the volunteer force in Fiscal Year 1974. This covers the cost of add-on recruiting and advertising activities, travel entitlements, special initiatives, bonuses, and scholarships. However, even this figure overstates the incremental cost because it fails to take into account the substantial cost savings brought about by the volunteer force program. Only now are we beginning to appreciate the full magnitude of these savings. Let me be more specific.

The Armed Forces today offers men and women excellent opportunities to pursue their own aras of interest. For example, in the Army, women can seek training in one of 434 different military occupations (right). For men, job opportunities range from combat arms specialities (Marine, far right) to technical areas such as on-the-job training in the Navy (sailor below).

## COST OF THE ALL-VOLUNTEER FORCE FY 1974 (IN $ MILLIONS)

**(RANGE OF POSSIBLE COSTS SAVINGS NOT CREDITED)**

**1—BASE CASE: $733.6**

- Represents Direct Costs Clearly Attributable to the AVF Effort
- Includes Expansions Since FY 1971 for Programs and Incentives such as Recruiting/Advertising, Bonuses and Scholarships, and Improvements to Post Services.

**2—PROJECT VOLUNTEER: $3,032.6**

- Includes Special Funds Set Aside for AVF Efforts ("PROJECT VOLUNTEER").
- Includes Pay and Allowance Increase of November 1971 (PL92-129).

**3—MAXIMUM ATTRIBUTABLE COSTS: $3,745**

- Includes Funding in the Base Case plus the Cost of PL92-129, plus Cost of Activities Which Could Be Attributed to the AVF Effort, such as:
  - Major Improvements in Living Areas • Civilization of KP • Education Programs

### Draft Turnover Costs

The two-year term of service of the draft guaranteed a high rate of turnover in the Army. High turnover is costly in terms of recruiting and training, and it also reduces readiness. A dramatic example of increased efficiency brought about by the volunteer force can be found in the Army's combat arms—the infantry, armor, and artillery jobs that represent a significant portion of the Army's total manpower requirements. In 1971, with the draft operating, the average amount of productive time on the job after formal training was 21 months for those who did not re-enlist; and of course, few did re-enlist. Today, 90 percent of those going into the combat arms are serving for three years or more, and the average amount of productive time after training is 33 months. The increase in productive time brought about by the volunteer force is one year, a 57 percent increase over 1971. The resulting reduction in turnover and the higher level of experience in combat units contribute to greater readiness. Moreover, as a direct result of this increase in productive time, the Army's accession requirements for the combat arms in 1976 will be reduced by 15,000-20,000, a reduction of about 40 percent. This not only reduces recruiting goals for that year, but it also will save the Army in excess of $100 million in training costs.

There are many other examples of efficiencies and cost savings being brought about by volunteer force programs. In most cases they result from reduced turnover. To estimate the rough magnitude of the cost offsets for the entire Department of Defense, let me summarize some changes that have taken place.

During the high draft years (1967 to 1969) each military accession contributed an average of 3.3 productive man-years, including an allowance for re-enlistment experience. Today each accession contributes an average of 4.1 productive man-years. After 1975 this figure will increase to 4.5 productive man-years.

### AVF Budget Savings

The annual budget savings which will occur as a result of these changes amount to $400 to $500 million in 1975 and $500 to $600 million in 1976 and beyond. Thus the costs of the added recruiting effort are largely offset, and a more reasonable estimate of the incremental cost of the volunteer force program is $300 million or less. This amounts to *less than one percent* of our total manpower costs. And less than one-half of one percent of the entire Defense Department budget, hardly enough to hinder our military capability.

All of these facts and figures—on quantity, quality, representation and cost—are given so that you may decide for yourself what is myth and what is reality about the volunteer force. **We interpret our experience to date as highly promising and I can assure you that there is no lack of commitment in the Department of Defense in implementing the Nation's policy of an All Volunteer Force in time of peace.**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